

On the Scent Of

Early morning. Spring. A slight chill,
wet, & leaves, wet, & a smell
that is wholly present. And of what is this

a whiff ? No terror — unusual; no anxiety —
more unusual. There are no
such mornings in my past. There were leaves.

Certainly it rained. It was dark, but only,
I swear, at night. This odor of rot,
of renewal, calls to something & is entirely

itself. It does not precisely smell of
happiness. Promise? Only in
its presence, in how utterly present it is. I am

taken — inhaling — swept with the leaves off,
or is it on into, the world, at loose ends.
A ghost without a room to haunt.

—Lisa M. Steinman
from *Absence & Presence*